



Workforce and Economic Development Workplan

Prepared by:

Anthony Cordova and Linda Bermudez

Contributions from:

Gary Adams, Chèri Fortin, Carla Grandy, Ginni May, LaCandice Ochoa, and Terrence Willett

The California Community Colleges system plays an essential role in developing the skilled workforce that powers the state's \$4.1 trillion economy, the world's fourth largest¹. Our system's 116 colleges serve as the primary pipeline for training workers in high-demand fields, providing pathways to credential attainment and economic mobility for diverse populations across priority sectors including health care; climate; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); education; and early education. This workforce development capacity is now strengthened by the *California Master Plan for Career Education*² and exemplifies the Chancellor's Office's interdepartmental collaboration, recognizing that workforce development intersects with multiple facets of the system's work requiring coordinated efforts across divisions to maximize impact.

Equitable workforce and economic development, a cornerstone of Vision 2030, continues to be critical for ensuring that all Californians have access to worker-centered and industry-focused education and support that leads to economic self-sufficiency. This Vision 2030: Workforce and Economic Development Workplan operationalizes Vision 2030's strategic commitment through concrete activities and measurable outcomes, serving as a roadmap for achieving transformative goals for California's workforce and communities.

Spotlight on Career Education Engagement Metric

Central to our commitment to equitable workforce development is a key Strong Workforce Program metric: **Increase with equity the percentage of career education students who earned 9 or more career education units in the district in a single year**³. This threshold represents meaningful student engagement beyond introductory exposure, with students who accumulate 9+ units demonstrating sustained commitment and significantly higher likelihood of completing certificates, degrees, and industry-recognized credentials.

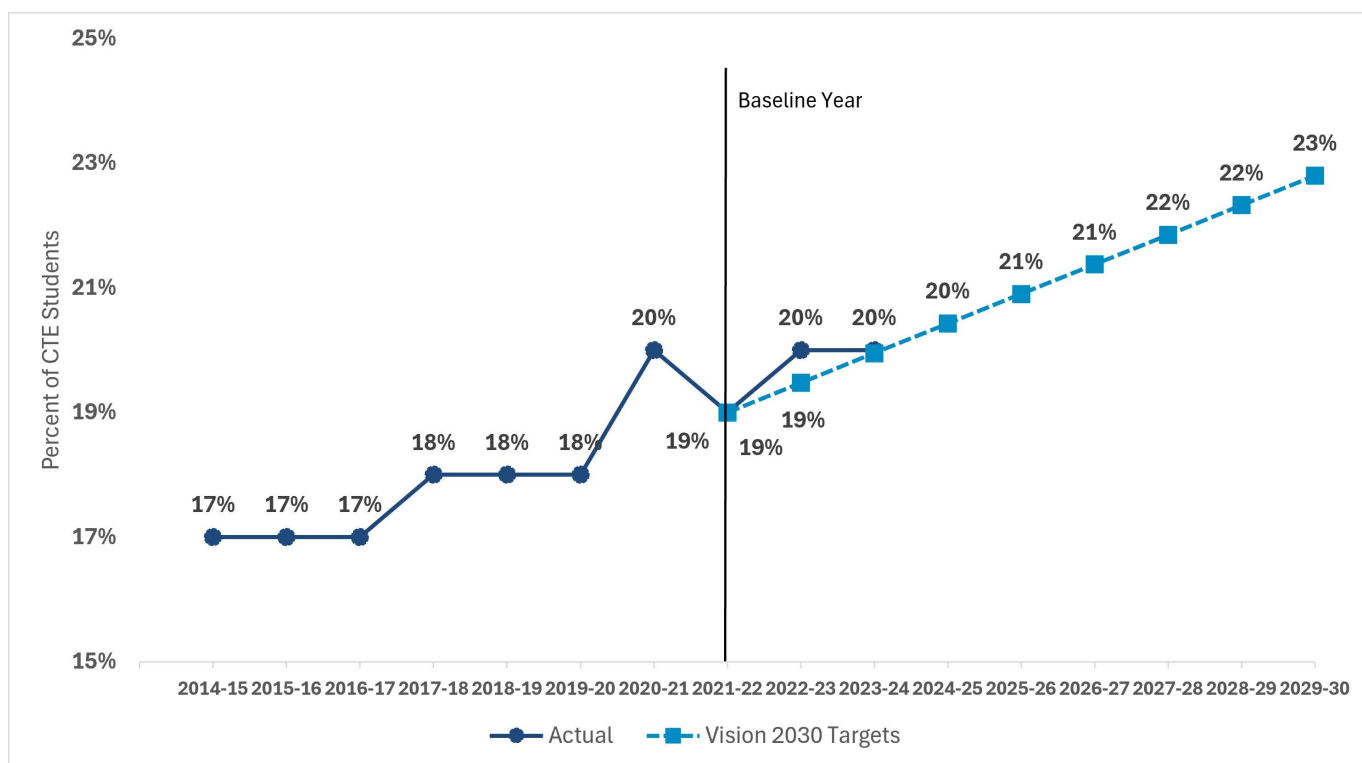
The Chancellor's Office has prioritized this metric because it holistically impacts all of the actions under Strategic Direction 2 of Vision 2030, serving as both a leading indicator of student success and a measure of our system's effectiveness in providing equitable access to comprehensive career education.

1 "California is Now the 4th Largest Economy in the World", Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, April 23, 2025, <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/04/23/california-is-now-the-4th-largest-economy-in-the-world/>

2 "California Master Plan for Career Education 2025," CalMatters, April 2025, <https://calmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-CA-Master-Plan-for-Career-Education.pdf>

3 Cal-PASS Plus Strong Workforce Metrics: https://www.calpassplus.org/Launchboard/SWP-MDD#_Toc138178722

Benchmark: By 2030, increase with equity the percentage of California community college CTE students who earn 9 or more credit CTE units by 20%.



The Vision 2030: Workforce and Economic Development Workplan will drive Actions 7-11 under Strategic Direction 2 in Vision 2030 – The July 2025 Edition.

7. Increase educational access for low-income workers to enhance their socio-economic mobility by:
 - a. Expanding “learn and earn models” like apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities including College Corps/California Service Corps⁴.
 - b. Increasing access to California community college baccalaureate degrees, especially for those communities where there is workforce shortage as well as in a university desert⁵.
8. Expand access to innovative **health care pathway programs** with a concentrated focus on nursing, allied health, and mental/behavioral health.
9. Advance community college engagement with the **four fields of climate practice**—facilities and operations, workforce development for green and blue economy jobs, curriculum integration of climate literacy, and community engagement.
10. Expand access to innovative, educational pathways in **STEM** disciplines that empower all students, especially historically under-served students to discover and pursue their passions.
11. Expand **education and early childhood education workforce** and address faculty shortages in high-demand fields through stackable credentials and credit for prior learning opportunities.

⁴ [California Service Corps](#)

⁵ [Distance Matters](#), RP Group, 2025

ACTIVITY 1: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

In order to move the Vision 2030 Strategic Direction 2: Equitable Workforce and Economic Development actions forward, the Chancellor's Office has focused on partnerships as the primary mechanism for systemwide implementation. The only way to effectively advance these critical workforce initiatives is through collaboration and strategic partnerships with industry, government, and educational stakeholders. This collaborative approach serves as the foundation for all subsequent workforce development efforts across the California Community Colleges system.

The Chancellor's Office actively cultivates and manages strategic partnerships through formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and collaborative agreements that enhance workforce development capacity across California's community college system. These partnerships are strategically designed to interconnect with demonstration projects and workforce initiatives, creating synergistic relationships that amplify program impact and sustainability.

Outcome: This activity drives Actions 7 through 11.

ACTIVITY 2: INCREASE EDUCATIONAL ACCESS FOR LOW-INCOME WORKERS TO ENHANCE THEIR SOCIO-ECONOMIC MOBILITY BY:

a. Expanding Apprenticeship Opportunities.

To contribute to scaling registered apprenticeship growth from California's current 200,000 apprentices toward Governor Newsom's goal of reaching 500,000 apprenticeship opportunities by 2029⁶, the Chancellor's Office is leading a coordinated systemwide expansion of apprenticeship opportunities across California's 116 community colleges through integrated program development and strategic initiatives. This comprehensive approach includes administering the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI) New & Innovative Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Grant Programs⁷, which utilizes Proposition 98 funds to create innovative apprenticeship opportunities in priority and emerging industry sectors where apprenticeship training is not fully established.

Complementing these grant programs, the Chancellor's Office is simultaneously executing the Apprenticeship Pathways Demonstration Project, engaging 25 community colleges statewide to create a replicable roadmap for credit-bearing apprenticeships that guarantee wages during education and employment after program completion. This project leverages Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) to award college units for apprenticeships, providing students with direct paths to certificates, degrees, employment, and upward social mobility while developing a statewide model for apprenticeships that can be scaled across the entire system. Through coordinated employer partnerships and industry stakeholder collaboration, these interconnected initiatives create sustainable apprenticeship programs that address critical skills gaps across key economic sectors.

6 "Governor Newsom releases new framework to create high-paying career pathways with and without four-year degrees" (2024): <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/12/16/governor-newsom-releases-new-framework-to-create-high-paying-career-pathways-with-and-without-four-year-degrees/#:~:text=This%20builds%20on,bolstering%20the%20economy>

7 CCCCO CAI: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/apprenticeship/ca-apprenticeship-initiative>

b. Increasing access to Economic Mobility Pathways.

The Chancellor's Office is implementing comprehensive initiatives that create economic mobility pathways for incumbent and low-income workers by breaking down barriers to education and career advancement across the system. Through coordinated leadership, strategic partnerships are being cultivated and executed with community-based organizations, unions, and employers to provide flexible delivery models and comprehensive support systems that meet workers where they are through work-based learning and community-embedded programs.

The United Domestic Workers (UDW) Demonstration Project, which includes an emphasis in working with the United Health Workers (UHW) focuses on economic mobility through direct collaborations between unions and the Chancellor's Office. These partnerships aim to dismantle barriers often faced by members, most of which are women and people of color, and construct educational pathways for them and their dependents. This will be done by supporting training and ongoing education needs while ensuring engagement, enrollment, and equitable student success is individualized. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) maps and Toolkits that emerge from these projects will be designed to capture adult learner engagement best practices that can be scaled across the state to address the unique needs of diverse worker populations while creating sustainable pathways to career advancement.

Outcome: This activity drives Actions 7, 8, and 11.

ACTIVITY 3: STRENGTHENING CALIFORNIA'S SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (STEM) WORKFORCE THROUGH THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM (BDP)

The Chancellor's Office is strategically expanding the California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree Program (BDP) to address critical workforce shortages in high-demand STEM sectors through targeted program development that directly aligns with regional economic needs, and with detailed implementation strategies outlined in the Community College Baccalaureate Degree Expansion Workplan. This systemwide initiative focuses on developing baccalaureate degree programs in essential areas such as healthcare, industrial automation, and advanced manufacturing technology, where specialized STEM knowledge is crucial for meeting California's evolving workforce demands. The technology component of STEM education is being prioritized by expanding automation and robotics programs that prepare students for careers in microchip processing and advanced manufacturing, while simultaneously developing healthcare programs that leverage technology integration to address critical nursing and allied health professional shortages.

The BDP is vital for expanding access to high-quality, affordable STEM education—especially for rural, place-bound, and working students who cannot relocate to pursue traditional four-year degrees, while these programs align directly with regional workforce needs and prepare students for in-demand STEM careers without requiring them to leave their communities. The California Community Colleges Baccalaureate Degree Program helps Californians gain employment that significantly increases their income by \$12,000 to \$28,000 per year⁸, and with the passage of AB 927⁹ affirming California's commitment to community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees, the Chancellor's Office is positioned to scale these STEM-focused programs across the system to ensure that all regions have access to career-advancing educational opportunities that directly respond to local economic development priorities.

Outcome: This activity drives Actions 7b, 8, and 10.

⁸ Community College Baccalaureate Graduate Employment and Earnings: https://www.accbd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Data-Points5_EmploymentEarnings_062624-1.pdf

⁹ Assembly Bill 927 (Medina 2021): https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB927?

ACTIVITY 4: EXPAND ACCESS TO INNOVATIVE HEALTH CARE PATHWAY PROGRAMS WITH A CONCENTRATED FOCUS ON NURSING, ALLIED HEALTH, AND MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH.

Responding to critical healthcare workforce shortages across multiple disciplines and service areas¹⁰, the Chancellor's Office is carrying out targeted strategic program development initiatives that strengthen the pipeline of qualified healthcare professionals. Here are some key examples:

Bridging the Nursing Gap: Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) Demonstration Project (Nursing Demonstration Project)

This strategic initiative expands nursing education capacity and establishes pathways for career advancement under Vision 2030. The ADN demonstration project increases enrollment in select California Community Colleges nursing programs to address registered nurse supply gaps while ensuring equitable access to the profession.

Dual Focus Areas:

- *Advanced technology integration:* Implementation of artificial intelligence-enhanced learning, simulation labs, and immersive technologies in curriculum
- *Strategic enrollment innovation:* Development of community best practices for non-traditional scheduling, including weekend and evening programs, night clinical rotations, and flexible pathways designed for working adults and incumbent workers

Community Healthcare Worker Programs

These pathway development initiatives provide students multiple entry points into public health careers, encompassing mental and behavioral health components tied to psychology pathways. Through partnership with California Department of Health Access and Information HCAI, community colleges develop accredited centers to issue Certified Wellness Coach (CWC) credentials under the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI), addressing critical workforce shortages in schools and community settings. The Chancellor's Office supports apprenticeship pathway development through pilot design, technical assistance, and resource development for scaling. Programs create stackable credentials from non-credit to credit to degree pathways, supporting enrollment growth and transfer opportunities for place-bound and working students.

Rebuilding Nursing Infrastructure (RNI) Grant Program

This comprehensive program addresses projected registered nurse shortages through multiple strategic approaches:

- *Capacity Building:* Expanding program enrollment and developing innovative educational partnerships
- *Technology Enhancement:* Integrating virtual reality simulations and advanced clinical training technologies
- *Faculty Development:* Recruiting and retaining nursing faculty through targeted support including

¹⁰ HCAI Certified Wellness Coach Employer Resource Guide: <https://hcai.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-Certified-Wellness-Coach-Employer-Resource-Guide.pdf#:~:text=or%20health%20centers.,Workforce%20Pathway%20%2D%20Certified%20Wellness%20Coach%20II,as%20clinics%20or%20health%20centers>

student loan programs and recognition of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses as eligible faculty in academic-practice partnerships

- *Community Focus:* Prioritizing place-bound institutions and rural communities to ensure statewide workforce distribution

Outcome: This activity drives Actions 7, 8, and 10.

ACTIVITY 5: ADVANCE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FOUR FIELDS OF CLIMATE PRACTICE—FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS, WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR GREEN AND BLUE ECONOMY JOBS, CURRICULUM INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE LITERACY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

California's bold climate action policies are reshaping the state's economy, requiring industries to adopt cleaner technologies and more sustainable practices. This transformation—driven by the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create a resilient, low-carbon economy—has far-reaching implications for workforce development. New skill sets and training pathways are essential, particularly in high-impact sectors like transportation, energy, forestry, and agriculture. These shifts vary by region: the north is investing in wildfire-resilient forestry; the Imperial Valley is becoming a global hub for sustainable lithium extraction; and the South Central Valley is leading with carbon capture and sequestration projects.

The California Community Colleges system is responding strategically, using the Strong Workforce Program (SWP) to modernize and expand career education programs aligned with regional needs--upgrading automotive labs for electric vehicles, training students in forest restoration and wildfire mitigation, and developing sustainable agriculture and agriculture tech programs. This work aligns with the [California Community Colleges Climate Action Framework](#), positioning California Community Colleges as key drivers of workforce development for industry that is changing due to climate regulations.

Outcome: This activity drives Action 9.

ACTIVITY 6: EXPAND EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKFORCE AND ADDRESS FACULTY SHORTAGES IN HIGH-DEMAND FIELDS THROUGH STACKABLE CREDENTIALS AND CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

To address critical teacher shortages across California¹¹ the Chancellor's Office is working to expand community college capacity and enhance teacher preparation partnership models by actively identifying, improving, and expanding promising community college teacher preparation partnership models; disseminating proven toolkits; and scaling CCC-CSU credential pathways to create seamless transitions for aspiring educators. Through the Early Childhood Education/Education Workforce Demonstration Project, colleges are implementing the Pathways for Advancing Visionary Educators (PAVE) Toolkit and developing 2+2 partnership models with California State University (CSU) campuses to deepen PK-3 teacher preparation while building a statewide Community of Practice among California community colleges and partner CSUs.

Complementing these efforts are the apprenticeship programs specifically designed for teaching permits and strengthening collaborative partnerships in teacher education deserts where workforce needs are most critical. The approach includes supporting the development of career education credential pathways that provide alternative routes to teaching careers, aligning preparation pipelines with existing degree programs and registered apprenticeships to create multiple pathways for aspiring educators to enter the profession through innovative partnerships and alternative credentialing approaches.

11 Tackling Teacher Shortages What We Know About California's Teacher Workforce Investments: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4537/download?inline&file=Tackling_Teacher_Shortages_CA_REPORT.pdf

Outcome: This activity drives Actions 7a and 11.

CONCLUSION

The California Community Colleges system plays a critical role in advancing career attainment and workforce development through education pathways and strategic partnerships. The Workforce & Economic Development Workplan activities and commitment to improving outcomes across career pathway preparation stages ensure greater access, support, and success for all students pursuing economic opportunity and meaningful careers.

Resources

Assembly Bill 927 (Medina 2021): https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB927?

Cal-PASS Plus Strong Workforce Metrics: <https://www.calpassplus.org/Launchboard/SWP-MDD#Toc138178722>

California is Now the 4th Largest Economy in the World, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom, April 23, 2025: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/04/23/california-is-now-the-4th-largest-economy-in-the-world>

California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI) Certified Wellness Coach Employer Resource Guide: <https://hcai.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/2024-Certified-Wellness-Coach-Employer-Resource-Guide.pdf#:~:text=or%20health%20centers.,Workforce%20Pathway%20%2D%20Certified%20Wellness%20Coach%20I,as%20clinics%20or%20health%20centers>

California Master Plan for Career Education 2025, CalMatters, April 2025: <https://calmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2025-CA-Master-Plan-for-Career-Education.pdf>

CCCCO CAI: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development/apprenticeship/ca-apprenticeship-initiative>

Community College Baccalaureate Graduate Employment and Earnings: https://www.accbd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Data-Points5_EmploymentEarnings_062624-1.pdf

Economic Value of the California Community Colleges System, May 2025: <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/report/cc-eis-main-report-2324-formatted-final-v3>

Governor Newsom releases new framework to create high-paying career pathways with and without four-year degrees: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/12/16/governor-newsom-releases-new-framework-to-create-high-paying-career-pathways-with-and-without-four-year-degrees/#:~:text=This%20builds%20on,bolstering%20the%20economy>

Tackling Teacher Shortages: What We Know About California's Teacher Workforce Investments: https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/media/4537/download?inline&file=Tackling_Teacher_Shortages_CA_REPORT.pdf

Distance Matters, RP Group, 2025: https://rpgroup.org/Portals/0/Documents/Projects/Exploring_Geographic_Isolation_Barrier_Equitable_Transfer_Outcomes/GeographicBarriers_Infographic_January2025.pdf?ver=2025-01-29-210931-227